

**Focus Group Research
with
Low Income White, African-American and Latina Women
with School-Aged Children
Who Do and Do Not Use Food Stamps**

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

Network Focus Groups

Background

Twenty focus groups were carried out during July and August, 1997 in Fresno, San José and Los Angeles, California to assist the California Nutrition Promotion Network for Low-Income Consumers in developing a social marketing campaign to encourage healthy eating and physical activity among low-income women in the state. This document summarizes the findings related to meal preparation, shopping behavior, the testing of merchandising concepts and to materials design. It is important to note that focus groups yield data that lead to insights and understanding of the population segments involved in the research. However, the findings are not generalizable to the entire population.

Major Findings

Meals

- < Participants generally prepared two meals a day during the week and reported that they usually ate dinner with their families. Meal planning/preparation was handled the same day.

Shopping Behavior

- < Children played a significant role in food purchased and in the types of meals prepared. Participants used both low-fat and whole milk as well as wheat and white bread, as mothers cater to the tastes of the young.
- < Participants reported shopping at the major supermarket chains (Von=s, Lucky, Save Mart), as well as at large discount retailers like Food 4 Less, Grocery Outlet and Costco. They used a list which might be written or simply consist of mental notes. Two primary factors determined where they shopped: price and proximity to the supermarket. They reported going to smaller grocery stores or convenience stores to pick up small items when they ran out (e.g., milk or bread).
- < Most reported that they shopped every two weeks though some indicated that they were weekly shoppers or monthly shoppers.

Physical Activity

- < The women perceived themselves as physically active though not as active as they thought they should be. All groups perceived having more energy as a benefit of being physically active. They perceived being physically active as prescriptive, i.e. a set amount of time for a specific number of days per week.

General Merchandising in Supermarkets

- < Participants overwhelmingly approved of the use of merchandising activities in retail outlets. Participants liked the idea of having events such as taste testing, coupon dispensing or demonstrations in grocery stores.

Merchandising Concepts

- < Participants reacted positively to both the Total Meal and Compucook Center concepts. They did recommend that both displays provide recipes that were easy, affordable and quick to prepare. Participants also suggested that the display be accompanied by signs and that the recipes center on practical ingredients.

In-Store Audio

- < Participants approved of having advertisements promoting healthy eating and physical activity on a store=s closed circuit system. Many noted that the advertisements would serve as reminders of the type of foods that they should purchase.

Sampling

- < Participants reported that they had tried new products or new dishes primarily after having tasted these. Promotions such as coupons and sales also led them to try new products.
- < Participants mentioned that they liked sampling foods in supermarkets. However, they noted that for in-store sampling, it was important that a person be present or by the taste test area.

Posters and Messages

- < Posters: Participants favored materials that were brightly colored, used photographs of real and familiar foods and/or ordinary people in family-type situations, and integrated healthy eating and physical activity. They liked the materials that evoked images of a support network (family; women exercising together) and familiar physical activity (walking; biking; no unfamiliar equipment). A The Good Things in Life@ poster was preferred in 4 of the 6 groups. Both revised posters contain similar elements.
- < Messages: No one message nor logo was preferred in Wave 3 groups. Participants preferred specific elements in messages such as a) short and direct messages that were quickly understood; b) an integration of physical activity and healthy eating; c) a minimal investment from them to decode the message; d) a congruence between the message and the graphics; e) suggestions for an action that was easy to do; and f) a sense that the message was fresh, new or contemporary.

Collateral Materials

- < Materials (brochures and tip sheets) that provided information on products such as how to select it, how to prepare it and nutritional content were well received by most groups and approved for use in different types of channels (doctor=s offices, WIC, schools, PTA). Brochures that had recipes, had bright colors and were simple were especially liked. Recipes were seen as appropriate for use in the retail outlets.
- < Participants watched cooking shows on television to obtain tips from chefs on how to prepare food items. Cooking shows and demonstrations were preferred over cookbooks.

Implications

This focus group research suggests that the target segment of low-income women in California are aware of the need to and the benefits of eating healthy and of engaging in physical activity. However, they are in need of strategies for preparing meals quickly and within a limited budget and for motivating them to be more physically active. Campaign design considerations may need to address the following:

- < Multiple strategies should be incorporated into any campaign, as no one strategy nor message will be sufficient to meet the objective of behavior change. These should integrate various channels including formal (e.g., schools, WIC) and informal (friends, family) support networks as well as a broad range of technologies (broadcast, print, computer);
- < Incorporate promotional messages on both healthy eating and physical activity in all campaign materials;
- < Use taste tests, price promotions and demonstrations to stimulate the purchase of a new product or dish.
- < Use retail outlets as a component of the overall campaign by incorporating the CompuCook Center into the Network merchandising strategy with appropriate signage offering free recipes. The final Network logo should be incorporated into the display itself as well as on any materials dispensed through the machine.
- < Any collateral materials used with the final merchandising strategies should be brightly colored. If images are to be used, designers may want to consider using photographs (instead of animation) that depict ordinary events using everyday people, families or foods.
- < Recipes can be an effective way of addressing the concerns with meal preparation quickly and with limited funds. However, ingredients should be those familiar to the target segment, use spices that they are likely to have already, suggest a limited number of ingredients and provide a picture of the finished meal.

Campaign designers will face a challenge in melding the format direction provide through the research findings with the >art= component required for the content of the message. The fact that no one poster, logo nor poster was preferred in all groups may point to the need for better sub-segmenting of the target audience (e.g., family life cycle, family size, stage of change) or to the need for attacking the issue through the whole complex that is the marketing mix.

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I. Introduction

A. Purpose

The Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section (CPNS) within the California Department of Health Services has long been a leader in promoting good health through its support for research, program design and implementation and promotions intended to change unhealthful eating behavior. Through its newest program, the Nutrition Network for Active Healthy Families (Network), the Department in collaboration with the state=s Department of Social Services, Department of Education and the UC Cooperative Extension aims to develop and implement a social marketing campaign focused on promoting healthy eating and physical activity among low income residents of California.

To develop the campaign, the Network contracted Juárez and Associates, a management consulting firm, to carry out a series of 20 focus groups with low-income women in California. The groups were conducted to develop concepts for the social marketing campaign mentioned above. The specific purpose of the research was as follows:

- ! To identify factors that prevent or facilitate healthy eating and physical activity;
- ! To have participants identify appropriate message concepts for the campaign;
- ! To identify appropriate media vehicles for the message;
- ! To test a specific merchandising concept for use in retail outlets;
- ! To identify appropriate places and activities for message dissemination; and
- ! To test some concepts and materials used in other campaigns.

It is important to note that results of focus groups are intended to provide readers with an impression of issues relevant to the target group(s). Due to the small number of participants in the groups and the self-selection process for participation, the sample cannot be considered statistically representative of the target population. Focus group findings, then, should be viewed as providing insights into overall attitudes and trends rather than as definitive and statistically significant.

B. Sample

Twenty focus groups were conducted in three distinct waves. Wave I consisted of two focus groups to test the moderator=s guide and to identify potential barriers to including food stamp and non-food stamp recipients in the same group. These two groups were held in Los Angeles and included a proportional mix of African American, Latina and non-Hispanic White females. Group I was with food stamp users while Group 2 was with non-food stamp users.

Wave II was comprised of twelve ethnically-specific groups moderated by three distinct moderators and served primarily to identify barriers to and benefits of eating healthy as well as increased physical activity, to test materials and to assist participants in designing their own

campaign; each group had at least three non-Food Stamp users and three Food Stamp recipients. Four focus groups were carried out in each site: Fresno, Los Angeles and San Jose, California. The groups were organized in the following manner: one group with African American women; one group with Anglo women; one group with Spanish-dominant Latinas; and one group with English-dominant Latinas. An African American woman moderated those groups with African American women; a bilingual Latina moderated the Latina groups and an Anglo woman moderated all other groups. All moderators were experienced in conducting focus groups and in working with the target segment.

Wave III consisted of six mixed-ethnic, English-speaking groups and served principally to synthesize findings and test revised design concepts; these groups had the same configuration of food stamp users and non-users. Two groups were carried out in each siteC Fresno, Los Angeles, and San Jose.

The research was conducted with mothers of children between the ages of 5 and 18 and whose annual income was less than \$20,000.00. Some of these participants in the groups used food stamps while others did not. Average attendance at each group was 9 women. Ages varied between a low of 19 to a high of 45. Most of the women were between 23 and 44 years of age.

In Wave 1 groups, more than half of the women in the groups were homemakers; more than one-third of the Wave 3 women reported being employed; and about half of the women in Wave 3 noted that they worked outside the home. Among the job they held were the following:

Teacher=s aides	Child care workers	Students
Factory	Farm laborers	Waitresses
House cleaners Clerks		Recreation aides

Several of the women reported that they were actively looking for employment. More women in San José reported that they were not working outside the home during Wave 2. Appendix C provides a brief summary in table form of each of the 20 groups.

C. Methodology

1. Screener Development

A screening questionnaire was developed and used for recruiting participants for the groups. Termination points were developed based on the criteria outlined in the RFP including income levels, food stamp status, marital status, prior focus group experience, number and age of children, and ethnicity. Appendix A contains a copy of the screener.

2. Moderator=s Guides

A moderator=s guide was developed for use throughout the duration of the research. Basic areas explored through the guide included the following:

- X Typical eating behavior;
- X Typical shopping behavior;
- X Typical meals;
- X Preparation of healthy meals;
- X Behavior related to physical activity; and
- X Questions related to the testing of broadcast and print materials.

The guide was a flexible instrument that permitted change as the emphasis shifted from a focus on shopping behavior in the early groups to that of testing of concepts in later groups.

Upon completion of a night=s work, a debriefing session was held with client representatives to review materials, determine changes to the guide and to identify the items to be emphasized in subsequent groups. The contractor=s Project Director also debriefed each moderator prior to the start of the next series of groups. Team meetings were held to identify difficulties and to assure that each moderator was aware of changes in the guides as well as of changes in the focus of the research. This iterative process allowed for immediate feedback on concepts and strategies that needed revisions and permitted the project to benefit from what was uncovered in the previous groups. Appendix B has copies of the different iterations of the guide as the research progressed to completion.

D. Organization of the Report

The document provides background on the project as well as the findings and implications for the campaign. Section II addresses findings of the research related to meals, shopping behavior, physical activity, and reactions to materials tested through the focus groups. Section III presents conclusions based on those findings and poses some implications for the development of the social marketing campaign on healthy eating and physical activity for low-income women in California.

II. Findings

This section of the report presents findings obtained through the focus group process. Findings address typical meals and eating behavior, knowledge of healthy meals, shopping behavior, knowledge and attitudes toward physical activity, and reactions to materials tested in the groups including messages, logos, posters, merchandising concepts, broadcast and print materials. Where meaningful, differences are noted by ethnicity.

A. Typical Meals

1. Meal Planning

Meal preparation was explored in all 20 groups. Participants were asked about who helps plan the meals as well as when they think about meal planning. In later groups, two scenarios were posed, and the women were asked to identify which scenario was typical of their situation. Meal preparation also explored concerns related to typical meals, meals prepared most frequently, how to make a meal healthier, use of recipes and what they do after dinner.

Meal Preparation Situations: The participants in Groups 3 to 10 were asked when they think about the food they will be serving for dinner. Most indicated that they think about what they

AL And I=up in the morning, and I=m already thinking about what I=m going to make for dinner.@

will be serving for dinner either the night before or that same day. For some, the morning provided a time for meal planning; for others, the dinner meal was planned a few hours before it was prepared. One noted that *AYou=re always thinking about the next meal.@*

In early groups, many women described the process of preparation as going through the

AL And I= in the refrigerator. And, if there=s nothing there, then I know I have to go to the market.@

cupboards and looking for what items they had available. Several women in the various groups reported that there was generally less available to them toward the latter part of the month; these may have been food stamp recipients.

Many did note that they prepare lists when they go shopping and in this way, plan meals for the days ahead. More of the women who were working mothers reported that they tended to plan for the week though the planning was sketchy. As one Los Angeles mother noted, *A[I] try to have a general idea for the week.@* One mother in San Jose did note that she would buy the cheaper grocery items to assure that the family would have groceries through the month.

Meal Preparation Scenarios: For Groups 11 to 16, meal preparation scenarios were read to the women during the group. They were asked to state which scenario they identified with and why. The Moderator=s Guide 3 in Appendix B has the complete text to both scenarios.

Briefly, Scenario 1 describes a woman who plans her meals while scouring through her refrigerator. Scenario 2 describes a woman planning a meal based on her son=s request for tacos. Most women indicated that they identified more closely with Scenario 1 than Scenario 2 though both scenarios captured situations common to them. Scenario 1 captured their sense of always rushing around to prepare the meals at the last minute. Another aspect that they identified with was that they *A...have to look and see and change the menu to put things together with what I have around.*@(Fresno 16) Others noted that they also use canned or frozen vegetables as substitutes for fresh produce. However, Scenario 2 captured their sense of always needing to prepare something that the children would eat.

2. Typical Meals

Participants were asked to describe typical meals and the situation for eating meals at breakfast, lunch, dinner and at snack-time. Housewives described different scenarios than those women who worked outside of the home. Most women reported that they prepare one to two meals daily during the week. More meals are prepared when the children are home from school and during weekends. Some women did state that during weekends, they prepare less meals as they tend to go out to eat. Mothers who stay at home reported preparing more meals daily; they noted that they usually prepare 3 meals with lunch being the one meal that they add to their routine.

Breakfast: Most mothers mentioned that they prepared a breakfast meal for the children, and (in the case of Latinas) for their spouses as well. Hot breakfasts included potatoes, waffles, pancakes, fried eggs, or cream of wheat cereal. Cold cereals were also a commonly reported breakfast item. The woman noted that they usually fed the children or family but did not necessarily sit down to eat with them nor ate breakfast. Working women described situations where they were rushed and ate *A...at work*®, *A...in the cafeteria*® (LA 1) or grabbed coffee, milk or juices as their breakfasts. Several stated that they might eat a banana for breakfast.

Lunch: Lunch time was a meal where the woman usually found herself eating alone at home or with co-workers. When eating in the work setting, the women stated that they eat *A...fast food cause of work*®. Also, several reported that they prepared sandwiches and fruit for their children=s lunch because *A...they serve garbage at school*®.(LA2) During weekends, the women reported that the kids *A...eat what=s there*® though for most others, lunch consisted of hot dogs, sandwich and chips, or trips to McDonalds or some other fast food outlet. Latinas especially reported that lunch consisted of leftovers from the previous day=s dinner.

Dinner: Dinner showed the most consistency in all groups. For the most part, the women noted that dinner time was different than the other mealtimes. Here, the family sat around the table

A...I try to make a balanced meal. I can get away [with] more during the day. But dinner is special.® (LA 2)

Lo
Fi
AKids are picky, so it matters. I go by whatever I think they might want.® (Fresno 3)

AI don=t want to make any kind of food they

together. Many indicated that the radio or television would be on. A few did note that dinnertime was Aquality time@ and served as a sharing experience where all would talk about the day=s events.

For the women in the groups, children played a major role in deciding what was served. Most noted that meal planning or preparation was A...a compromise@ between what they knew the children should eat and what the children would eat. Many of the women said that they try to combine what the children like with what is A...good for them@. (LA2) Dinnertime meals were influenced as much by what was available as by what the children A...want to eat.@ As one said, A*My daughter is a meat eater; she=d rather have meat than anything else.*@ (LA 1) Others described situations where one child was vegetarian or had some special diet and so they found themselves preparing two different meals for dinner. Also, the women reported that they generally took more time to prepare this meal.

Frequently Prepared Meals: Participants were asked to identify some of the dishes or ingredients that they prepared often. Typical dinner ingredients mentioned by women across all groups were salads, pasta, chicken, turkey, potatoes, rice, and some vegetable. Other typical dishes included spaghetti, tacos, lasagne, and pizza. In two groups (LA1; San Jose 9), participants mentioned that one favorite children=s meal was Top Ramen noodles. Common to the African American groups were more dishes like steak and potatoes and fried chicken. More common among Latinas were soups with a variety of vegetables. Common among all groups was the consumption of beef. According the them, in preparing these meals, they looked for dishes that were cheap, quick and easy to prepare and that afforded them a variety of ways to prepare the ingredients. Another important factor was that the ingredients were looked upon favorably by their children.

Snacks: Snacks times differed and usually took place after school, in the early evening for those who ate late or prior to bedtime. The women noted that snacks consisted of fruit though a few reported that they offered the children cookies and candy as snacks.

Regardless of working status, the women noted that the meals change if they are eating alone or with their family. When the whole family eats together, as during the weekend, the meals were reported to be A...*fancier*@ or A...*more fattening*@. (LA 2)

Making a Healthier Dinner: Researchers asked the women to cite ways in which a meal could be made healthier. Among the various dishes they were given were spaghetti and tacos.

Common across all dinners and all groups were the following suggestions:

- X Use vegetables with the meal
- X Use less or no red meat
- X Substitute vegetables, chicken or turkey for beef
- X Use less oil
- X Broiling, boiling or baking instead of frying
- X Heat the tortillas instead of frying them for tacos and enchiladas

One woman in Los Angeles added that a person should exercise after dinner to complete a healthy meal.

Use of Recipes: Participants were asked whether they used recipes as well as when they would be likely to try a new recipe. In four of the six group where asked, the women reported that they did use recipes. Places where they acquired recipes were magazines, newspapers and television. In one Group in San Jose, one woman had just been to the grocery store and pulled out a number of recipes cards that she had picked up at her local outlet. Only one group of women (Fresno 6) reported that they did not use recipes. Several women in the other groups reported that they cook by approximating the measures on ingredients; more of Latinas tended to prepare food in this manner.

In all groups, two factors were singled out as influencing their use of a new recipe: (a) having sampled the dish and (b) the preparation factor. The latter consisted of having the recipe be simple and quick to fix as well as the woman having the time to fix the meal. Another less frequently mentioned factor was that the dish needed to be inexpensive to prepare. Included in the trial of new recipes were several subtexts. For example, some participants mentioned that the recipe had to be uncomplicated and call for a limited number of ingredients; participants in three groups mentioned that there should be no more than five (5) ingredients to the recipe. Others mentioned that the number of ingredients was not important. Of importance was that they have all the ingredients at home already.

Use of Microwave: In the early groups, participants were asked about the use of microwave ovens. All women in these groups reportedly used the oven on a daily basis. They stated that they principally used the microwave oven for reheating food as it tended to change the flavor or texture of the food.

3. After Dinner Behavior

For the most part, the after dinner ritual consisted of clearing the table and washing of dishes. Other activities that they reportedly engaged in after dinner included:

- X Walking the dog
- X Watering the yard
- X Reading books
- X Walking at the park
- X Bathing of children
- X Watching television

B. Healthy Meals

Participants in all groups were asked to identify what constituted a healthy meal and to describe a healthy dinner. Finally, they were asked to identify what they teach their children about eating healthy.

1. Healthy Meal Description

Participants were asked to identify the ingredients of a healthy meal. In all groups, the women included comments on the process for preparing the meal as well as the ingredients. Among the various aspects they reported as constituting a healthy meal were the following:

<div> <div>Skining</div> <div>Not frying</div> <div>Boiled</div> <div>Broiled</div> </div>	<div>Lean meat</div>	<div> <div>Vegetables: broccoli, baked potato</div> <div>Low fat, low calorie</div> <div>High fiber</div> <div>Lots of iron</div> <div>Fruits</div> <div>No dressing on salad</div> </div>
	<div> <div>Chicken</div> <div>Turkey</div> <div>Skinless chicken</div> <div>Fish</div> </div>	

Vegetables were the most frequently reported item in the majority of the groups as constituting part of a healthy meal. Other less common items included grilled fish, cottage cheese, juice, pasta, white meat, and yogurt. More Latinas volunteered >less frying= as a manner to improve a meal than women from the other ethnic groups, especially in regard to frying tortillas for making tacos.

2. Healthy Dinners

Participants were also asked to describe a healthy dinner. Again, the participants followed a scheme similar to that provided above where they included the preparation process as well as the ingredients. Among the dinners reported as being healthy were the following:

- X Baked chicken, salad
- X Roast, mashed potatoes and vegetables
- X Fish
- X Baked potato

X Steamed rice, spinach

3. Teach Kids about Healthy Eating

When asked what they teach their children about healthy eating, a number of issues were brought out by the participants. Women in San Jose (8, 9) and Los Angeles (19) mentioned that A...*the kids teach us* (San Jose 8)@ since they are taught healthy eating habits in school. Several other women noted that they teach children by how they prepare the food and by eating healthfully. Finally, several women mentioned that by eating healthy, the children would A...*get like Popeye* (LA1)@; A...*look like Dad* (San Jose 7)@; or A...*they will grow tall and pretty* (San Jose 7).@ Several women in different groups also noted that you A...*have to tell them why to do it* (Fresno 16).@ Finally, others suggested that to get them to actually eat healthier, one needs to make fruits and vegetables accessible. The latter could happen by making them available, cooking them the way kids want to eat them, and providing a variety of fruits and vegetables.

C. Typical Shopping Behavior

Participants were queried about their grocery shopping behavior. Probes included questions about where they shop, reasons for preferring those stores, types of items they purchased and the types of activities that might influence shopping behaviors. This section of the report provides the findings related to these topics.

1. Grocery Stores

Women were asked to name their preferred grocery stores. Among the stores mentioned frequently were the following:

Vons	Lucky	Ralphs
Food 4 Less	Safeway	Albertsons
Save Mart	Pac N Save	Food Max

Less frequently mentioned but important to the regional locations were stores such as Top Value in Los Angeles, Knob Hill in San Jose, and the Grocery Outlet in Fresno. When asked specifically if they also shop at warehouse-type stores, participants mentioned that they shop at those that accept food stamps. Those who do use warehouse-type stores mentioned that they shop at Costco, Price Club and the Grocery Outlet. These stores were favored when large quantities were needed.

Most women reported that they engaged in a major shopping trip either weekly or every two weeks. However, there was a wide range in variation with some stating that they shopped daily while others noted that they shopped monthly.

Participants mentioned that they also shopped at the local 7-11 or other convenience stores only when they ran out of an item such as milk or bread. These were viewed as being more expensive than the larger chain grocery stores. In almost all groups, at least one woman in each group mentioned that she also shopped at farmer=s markets, swap meets, or local fruit stands.

Reasons stated for preferring the large chain grocery stores were also provided. The two most important reasons given for store preferences were the following:

A... I find that I save a lot of money plus it=s close to me.@ (San Jose 10)
--

- X Cheaper prices
- X Close to their home

Included in their perceptions of cheaper prices were the use of coupons, use of special Areward cards@, and the use of incentives such as sales or 2 for 1 prices. Also, many of the women reported that they looked for sales, especially in store circulars or newspaper advertisements. Several women stated that they shopped at several stores to obtain the best prices. For example, one San José woman stated that she shopped at four different stores as each offered the lowest prices on different items. Finally, African American women reported driving farther to their preferred grocery stores.

Among other reasons cited for store preferences across most groups were the following:

- X High quality
- X Service
- X Cleanliness of the store
- X Variety of items available

Quality and service were other reasons mentioned frequently in the reasons for preferring the different stores. The women stated that quality, especially of the meat and produce, was important in where they went for their purchases. Several noted that they preferred to buy their produce in farmer=s markets or local fruit stands as the items were generally perceived to be cheaper. More importantly, they perceived these items to be fresher and of better quality. Finally, service was mentioned by several women in three of the groups. Service included getting help from checkers and having short lines at the checkout stands.

2. Specific Items Purchased

As mentioned earlier, many of the women shopped from a list. The list, in most cases, was a written list though some women did mention that they made a mental list of what was needed. The participants were also asked to name those items that they purchased during every shopping trip. Among the items listed in all groups were as follows:

Fruit: Apples, Grapes, Bananas, seasonal fruit (strawberries, nectarines, peaches)
Vegetables: Lettuce, Carrots, Tomatoes, Broccoli, Corn, Potatoes
Other: Milk, Bread, Some type of meat

The women were asked about their purchase of bread, milk, meat and beans. Additionally, they were asked about how they can recognize lean meats.
Bread Consumption: For the most part, the women indicated that they buy various types of breads. Among those more commonly mentioned were

White bread	Sourdough	Muffins Tortillas
Wheat bread	French	Bagels

Most also reported that they buy both wheat and white bread; they usually eat the wheat bread while the white bread is consumed by their children. The latter, they noted, do not favor the taste of the wheat bread. When asked what could be done to get them to try wheat bread, the women responded that coupons or special meals would get them to purchase the wheat bread.

All women also reported that they buy both corn and flour tortillas. Latinas were more likely to report making corn and flour tortillas at home rather than purchasing them.

Milk Consumption: Women were asked to identify the type of milk that they purchased on a regular basis. Women in most of the groups reported that they buy whole milk. The major reason cited by the women for purchasing whole milk was that it is the children who drink the milk. And, they noted, kids complain that nonfat and low fat milk A.. *Tastes watery* (Fresno, 3)@. According to some of the women, whole milk has more vitamins than low fat or nonfat milk. Others did state that 2% milk tastes very similar to whole milk and might be a means of transitioning consumption from whole milk to lower fat milks. Other strategies mentioned by the participants for helping the children in acquiring a taste for lower fat milks included altering the latter in the following ways:

- X Add chocolate
- X Use it for shakes
- X Add oatmeal
- X Add ice cream
- X Take the label off the container

Women in the first group however, mentioned that they would rather consume less whole milk than switch to low-fat because of the taste.

Meat Consumption: Participants were also asked to name the various types of meat that they buy. They were also asked to cite how they can identify lean meats. Among the variety of meats that were mentioned frequently in all groups and which they purchase were roasts, ground beef, chicken, turkey, ground chicken and ground turkey. Several stated that they will buy@...*whatever is cheap* (LA 1)@ or A...*whatever is on sale* (San Jose, #8).@ Other less

commonly mentioned meats were lamb, pork chops, fish, and bacon. During the initial groups, participants were asked to name lean cuts of meat; for the most part, no one was able to mention any lean cuts of meat. The question was rephrased for later groups; the women were then asked to identify lean meats. Among the ways that the participants stated that they recognized lean meats were the following:

- X Label: read the percentage of fat (15%; 22%)
- X Skinless meat
- X Trim the excess fat
- X Buy chicken or turkey
- X Color

A...[a] pretty color (LA 2)@.

AIf it=s redder, it=s less fat (Fresno 4)@.

The Anglo women in two of the groups ((San Jose 10; LA 12) stated that buying lean meat was not a big concern in their households.

Bean Consumption: The women in all groups reported purchasing bean products. Among the more commonly mentioned products were Pinto beans, string beans, red beans, Navy beans, Garbanzo beans and lentils. More women in San Jose reported also consuming black-eyed peas. Other items also mentioned though less frequently were canned pork and beans, canned refried beans and kidney beans. Bean consumption differed by ethnicity, with Anglo women reporting eating a wider variety of beans than the women from the other ethnic groups.

The women noted that other items that they tend to buy from other areas of the store included pasta, canned items, noodles and cereals. Most indicated that what they buy will depend on what is on their list.

Purchasing of items that were out of the ordinary or had never been bought before were also explored. The women noted that the purchase of such items was dependent on a number of factors. Among the conditions and factors they reported as motivating them to try new products were the following:

- X When sampled
- X When coupled with a promotion
- X When requested
- X When making something special or for a special event
- X When in season

The women stated that they were more likely to purchase something out of the ordinary or a new item after they had sampled it. They mentioned that they were more likely to purchase an item if there were some coupon or other discount promotion with it. Also, women stated that they would buy an item if their kids asked for it. Additionally, the participants mentioned that they were more likely to buy a new item if they were making something for a special event such as a holiday, a party, trying a new recipe, or when they were having company. Finally, some

mentioned that they were likely to buy a new item if it was in season, as it was likely to be more affordable.

Canned vs Frozen Products: Questions were posed about the purchase and use of canned products. Participants reported that they buy canned items such as fruit cocktail, corn, string beans, peas, tuna, soups and canned fruit that was not in season. One Latina in Los Angeles stated that she buys canned products because A...*they have less sodium* (LA 14).@.

Frozen products were also reported to be used by the participants. Among the items mentioned in the different groups that they buy frozen were broccoli, juice, Tater Tots, hamburger and corn dogs. The women in two groups noted that the advantage that frozen items have over fresh ones is that they A...*keep longer* (LA 14).@.

The women in Fresno Group 3 noted that they preferred fresh to canned or frozen produce. However they would buy either of the latter items when the product sought was out of season.

Different Brands: The women were asked what could be done to get them to try a different brand of an item. In some groups, they were asked what could be done to get them to try a different brand of beans. Across groups, the most frequent response was that they would try a different brand if it was on special or if the brand was cheaper. As one Los Angeles woman stated, A[She]... *would get the store brand if I get money back* (Los Angeles 12).@ Other strategies that the women mentioned that would get them to try a different brand were tasting the new brand of product and being familiar with the brand.

D. Physical Activity

As part of the research focus, themes related to physical activity were explored in all groups. The participants were asked about what is physical activity, to identify the types of activity they engage in and to relate the benefits of engaging in physical activity. Finally they were asked to identify ways in which other women might be motivated to engage in physical activity.

1. What They Do

Participants were asked to identify the types of physical activities in which they engage. Across all groups, the one activity mentioned was walking. Many of the women reported that they walk with their children, walk at work, around the block or to the beach as part of a conscious effort to get exercise. Other activities mentioned as those they engage in were as follows:

- X Biking
- X Swimming
- X Chasing kids around the house

X Doing yard or garden work

A portion of the women noted that they have difficulty finding the time to engage in any activity.

In later groups, women were asked to separate the activities that they did with children from those they did by themselves and those that they did with other adults. In most groups, women did carry out physical activity with their children, very little by themselves and none with other adults. Activities engaged in with other children were the same one outlined above as well as playing sports and dancing; those they did alone included jogging, going to the gym or using equipment such as rowers. For many, the biggest challenge in being physically active was finding time. The women reported that with housework, caring for the children and working, there was no time left for being physically active. In all groups, women reported that they were not as physically active as they should be.

The most commonly reported benefit to being physically active was having more energy. Others listed included feeling healthier, feeling better, relieving stress, being able to sleep better and losing weight. Less common responses included living longer and reducing osteoporosis. The women reported that the benefits for kids included releasing some of the energy and helping in their socio-emotional development (independence, social skills).

2. Physically Active Defined

The women in all groups were asked to provide their perceptions on being physically active. For many, being physically active meant doing the chores around the house and keeping up with their children. Others listed characteristics of what it meant to be physically active. Among the more commonly reported attributes of women who were physically active were the following:

- X In shape and muscular,
- X Have an ideal weight,
- X Are happy in life,
- X Engage in an outdoor activity,
- X Are tanned and fit,
- X Go to a gym,
- X Engage in an activity at least for 1 hour, and
- X Sweat

3. What Should be Done

San Jose 11: *[Physical activity is women=s work--bathe the kids, clean house].@*

LA 11:

LA 11: *Once you get up, [physical activity] is nonstop.@*

San Jose 18:

Participants were asked what should be done for them to be more physically active.

In many of the groups the women reported that they A...*Need motivation* (Fresno 15)@ and A...*need to find 20 minutes* (Fresno 16)@ to initiate and keep a routine going. Another paraphrased it stating that mothers need to A...*just turn off the TV and do something* (Fresno 3).@ One woman noted

that A...*they just have to plan- Tomorrow I=m going o do this* (LA 1).@ Others added that women should begin physical activity by A...*do[ing] it with friends* (LA 1)@ or with a A...*support group* (LA 19).@ Simple suggestions included parking the car far from the entrance to a grocery store and walking the distance; eating right; taking stairs instead of elevators; not using the car when possible; and doing aerobics to music. Less common suggestions included meditation, going for bike rides, jogging and joining a gym.

A *We need a group thing. Like a buddy system.*@

A *Call--O.K., Mom. Let=s go walking.*@

Fresno 15

A *This is my time for being with the kids.*@

4. What do they Teach their Children About Physical Activity

When asked what they teach their children about being physically active, most of the women stated that this is something that comes naturally to children. One stated that kids A...*are always running* (LA 1).@ A different perspective was that children are the ones who teach them about being physically active. Finally, several mothers noted that one simply engages in activity and the children will mimic their behavior. Mothers in several different groups related stories of how their children will begin to do exercises with them once they get started. Several in different groups also pointed out how they love to dance with their children.

E. Reactions to the Merchandising Concept

Participants were asked to respond to two different merchandising concepts. During the initial fourteen groups, participants were asked to react to a Total Meal offer; the last six groups were asked to comment on a Compucook Center concept. The concepts were described as follows:

Total Meal: A grocery store would display a total meal where all ingredients would be placed together for consumers to purchase.

Compucook Center: Compucook consists of an automated display where, through a touch screen, consumers would be able to obtain information on a variety of concerns related to meal preparation or consumption. The computerized display would permit dispensing of recipes or other such information.

1. Total Meal:

Participant reactions to the Total Meal concept was generally positive. They said of the concept *Alt tempts me.* (LA 1)@; *Alt=s great* (LA 2)@; *A...It=s a good idea for what to cook* (San Jose 9)@; *A...[it] makes shopping easy and affordable* (San Jose 10)@; and *A...muestra como cambiar la rutina* [shows how to break the routine] (LA 13).@ Finally, when compared to going out to eat, one woman in Group 2 (LA) mentioned that Total Meal allowed more control over what they ate. Some negative aspects of the concept were brought out in two of the groups. One woman in San Jose (7) did not find the idea interesting. In several of the groups, the women were concerned about the price of the meal and wanted assurances that they could afford all the ingredients.

Participants also made a number of suggestions to improve the concept. Among the recommendations they made were:

- X Keep the meal simple
- X Add a sampling component
- X Add a coupon component
- X Place the items on sale
- X Add a recipe component
- X Add a sign

There was no consensus as to where the Total Meal display should be located in the grocery store.

2. Compucook Center

The women in Groups 15 through 20 were asked to react to the Compucook concept. In general, the reaction was positive. They noted that the machine would *A...make me curious* (Fresno 15)@ and *A...would be informative* (Fresno 16)@. The majority of all the women stated that they would try the machine. A Los Angeles woman echoed the sentiments of all groups when she said smiling and looking at the picture of the Compucook display, *AGo for it!* (Los Angeles 20).@

Again, there was no consensus in the groups as to where to locate the Compucook Center. While two groups mentioned that it should be by the produce area, others mentioned that it should be by the entrance to the store or had no opinion. The women did make a number of suggestions for improving the Compucook Center. These included the following items:

- X Add product samples
- X Add free coupons
- X Place a sign with either *AFree Recipes@* or *AFree Coupons@*
- X Add a picture to the recipe card.

Women in two different groups did express concerns about the center. One raised the issue of whether the price of food would rise as a consequence of the center. Another asked whether the food stamp allotment would be affected by the presence of the center.

F. Reactions to Broadcast and Print Materials

1. Response to Television Advertisements

Participants were shown a series of two or three television commercials. Each group was shown a series of advertisements targeting their particular population segment. For example, Spanish-dominant Latinas viewed Spanish-language television ads for eating fruits and vegetables (*Etapas*; *Cinco Porciones*) as well as for Taco Bell, Crystal margarine and Burger King; African American women viewed a Burger King, Sizzler, Crystal Light, Foot Locker, or a Lawry's advertisement. Anglo women viewed advertisements for Dole, Foot Locker, McDonalds, Burger King or Sizzler. The final groups in Wave 3 viewed an animated Dole fruits ad, an Arby's, Taco Bell, Hamburger Helper, Burger King, or a Crystal Light ad. As a transition into the discussion, women were asked to think about advertisements that they had viewed recently. Few of the women were able to recall impressionable ads, except in later groups. Several women in Wave 3 mentioned that they were impressed by the ad where a woman is shown smoking through a hole in her throat.

General reactions to the television advertisements were as follows:

- X Price: Participants mentioned that the significant item in the McDonald's commercial was the price of the meal advertised. They noted that the kids would be attracted to the ad given the focus on the "George of the Jungle" theme.
- X Food: The Burger King, Sizzler and Arby's advertisements, according to participants, made the food look very appealing. The women noted that the food looked A...*fresh* (San Jose 9)@ and A...*tempting* (San Jose 10).@ They found the food in the Crystal margarine ad very attractive and described it as A...*look[ing] natural* (San Jose 19).@
- X Colorful: The women found the Dole ad, in particular, very colorful and attractive. They liked the animated fruits and mentioned that it would attract children's attention.
- X Music: African American women liked the music in the English-language Burger King ad, although all other groups found it to be too slow.

In all groups that viewed the Foot Locker ad, women found it unappealing describing it as A...*too much* (LA 11)@ or A...*not relevant [to their lives]* (LA 12).@

Spanish-dominant Latinas also viewed two Spanish-language television commercials. *Etapas* was a rendition of the different life stages executed in a watercolor-type animation. *Cinco Porciones* showed a family setting along with images of fruits and vegetables. Both ads had similar music and songs.

- X *Etapas*: All Spanish-language groups described this ad as blurry. It was also characterized as A...*no apetiza* [unappetizing] (Fresno 5)@ A...*necesita caras contentas* [needs happy faces] (San Jose 7)@ and A...*no está claro* [unclear] (LA 14).@ They did like the music and described the overall ad as colorful.
- X *5 Porciones*: The women in all Spanish-language groups liked this ad describing it as energetic, attractive due to the use of fresh fruits and vegetables and with characters that appeared happy and friendly. They mentioned that they liked the inclusion of the family in the ad.

Creation of TV Ad: Participants were asked to create their own television ad as well. Among the items that the women suggested should be in a TV commercial were the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Use a family | Use ordinary, everyday people |
| Depict fresh fruit | Have a multicultural scene |
| Tie eating and physical activity | Use a park scene |
| Show women having fun | Depict steamed food |
| Use music | |

2. Radio Advertisements

The groups also heard a series of radio commercials promoting the consumption of five fruits and vegetables a day. The ads varied in format with some being commentaries, others being amusing, serious or provocative. General reactions to the advertisements are as follows:

- X Commentaries: The women mentioned that these ads were A...*boring*@ or A...*need[ing] to be more energetic* (Fresno 16)@ as well as A...*too long* (San Jose 17).@ Several did note that they liked the idea of the ad mentioning the link to cancer or the National Cancer Institute.
- X Fast Talker: Women in several of the groups found the ad amusing and added that though the man talks really fast, one can still make out the message; another noted that because he talks fast, one tends to listen carefully.
- X Peeling a Grape: One group of African American women found the ad very sexy; most other groups, however, did not like the ad, though they did like the jazzy music in the background. One woman described it as A...*too sexual* (Fresno 15).@
- X Chef: No group liked this ad and described it as A...*annoying* (LA 12)@ and A...*too long* (Fresno 14)@
- X Car Wash: This ad was viewed as amusing with little other commentaries.

Create Radio Ad: Women were asked to create a radio advertisement for a campaign promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The women stated that a radio ad should contain the following elements: humor; lively music (*Ajazzzy@*; *Aupbeat@*; *Atropical@*); and use either a male or female announcer with a believable voice. Suggestions for other actual formats included newswatches, call-in talk shows, and contests.

3. Reactions to Print Materials

Participants also were given the opportunity to view a number of brochures, cook books, tip sheets and recipe cards. They were asked what they preferred in terms of the different formats and the type of information they would like to receive.

a. Tip Sheets

Participants were shown several tip sheets. They reported that they liked the information provided such as how to select items, how to prepare them and nutritional contents. They described the tip sheet as providing information that they needed in a clear and concise manner. Group 11 women preferred the tip sheet to the recipes because it was simpler and faster. They like the graphics and the size. They described the tip sheet How to Use Fresh Herbs as informative.

b. Recipes

Participants mentioned that the preferred recipe cards were those with pictures and that were large enough so as not to be easily lost. They reacted very positively to the Lean N Easy with Beef recipes noting that the pictures were very attractive. Not many favored the Salmon recipes, but it may have been that the content (Salmon) was not appealing. Several women mentioned that salmon was A...*very expensive* (San Jose 10)@.

c. Cookbooks

Three cookbooks were briefly demonstrated during the groups. The women noted the different aspects that they preferred from each of the cookbooks. Among the features favored by the women were the following:

Fanfare: Pictures; foldout format

Easel: Practical; Needs pictures. This cookbook was preferred by the women in most groups because of its stand up feature.

2 Ingredient: Like the concept of a limited number of ingredients.

d. Brochures

Participants were shown a number of brochures over the course of the evening. Not all commented on all brochures. As a result, below are summaries of comments made on the various brochures.

Compre, Cocine & Cene con Poca Grasa/Shop Cook & Dine Lean (Project LEAN): Participants found the brochure simple, and they liked that it provided ideas of what to buy. The English counterpart was described as easy to read and nice looking. One woman added that she liked the way it broke the information down. However, women in two different groups noted that it did not offer new information.

Frutas y Vegetales (DHS, Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section): The women in Groups 7, 13, and 14 liked this brochure and preferred it over the new execution. They described it as colorful, more detailed, and more attractive than the new version. They also noted that it showed more typical food. Finally, they liked the photographs.

New Latino Spanish-language Brochure (DHS, Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section): The participants liked the message and the family focus of the brochure. They also liked that the theme was >traditions=. Group 14 women, however, stated that they would probably just read it and throw it away.

New Homes, New Foods: The women did not like this brochure describing it as boring, too big and not practical. They suggested that recipes as well as color be added to the brochure. They did like the ideas for snacks.

The Shape of Good Eating: The women mentioned that the brochure had a very clear message and that they liked the information on >portions=; they also noted that they liked the pictures in it. However, they added that it needed color.

Celebre con una Fiesta al Aire Libre (Project LEAN): The participants liked the focus on the family and noted that they found the situations depicted in the brochure and the pictures as relevant to them.

Celebrate Health with A Low-fat Fiesta (Project LEAN): The women in the various groups described the brochure as colorful and pretty. Many liked the recipes because the ingredients were familiar and easy to fix. Several groups suggested that the brochure would benefit by having pictures in it. One woman did note that it had A...*some good and some gross* (LA 12)@ recipes. One group noted that the design was dated; others suggested that the brochure needed to include information on A...*what=s healthy* (Fresno 16).@

It=s Your Move (On the Move): Participants were captivated by this brochure. They liked the graphics and found the information provided in the brochure to be novel and useful. Also, they noted that they could show it to their children.

Before and During Pregnancy You Need to Folate (Maternal and Child Health): The women noted that this brochure was targeting pregnant women. As a result, they seemed to dismiss it.

Eat Lean (Project LEAN): The women noted that they found the brochure was clear and easy to understand. However, they noted that it provided common sense information. Group 11 women added that it would not get them to eat lean.

G. Reactions to New Concepts

1. Messages

A number of messages were tested in the 20 groups carried out for the Network. A full list of the messages is available in Appendix D, and readers are referred to this appendix to obtain a summary of comments on the different messages. During Wave 3 (Groups 15 to 20), participants reviewed revised messages and were asked to identify a preferred message. No one message was preferred by the women in all the groups. Among those preferred and reasons cited for the preference are as follows:

Full of Life: Preferred in Groups 15 and 17. The participant mentioned that they liked this message because it talks about energy and it appeals to the family. They noted that A...*It=s there. It=s to the point. Live a longer life.* (San Jose 17).@

Can Do: Preferred by Group 18. They described it as being A...*to the point@* and A...*words are simple* (San Jose 18). This message was also one of two that most of the women in Group 20 liked, as they characterized it as A...*motivating@* and A...*easy to do@*.

Food Fit: Preferred by Group 19. The women stated that this message made them want to learn about food.

Good Things in Life: This was one of two that appealed to Group 20. They liked that it integrated both healthy eating and exercising.

Below is a summary of the positives and suggested changes for the messages on healthy eating and physical activity as derived from the comments made by the women in all twenty groups. Participants mentioned the following aspects that they liked in messages:

- X Clear and simple. Larger fonts and messages set apart from the graphics were found easier to read. For example with Lighten Up, the women said, *Alt doesn't tell you what to eat.*@
- X Quick to interpret. They wanted the message to be easily understood and quickly decipherable. They did not want to spend time having to interpret the message. One noted that with Lighten Up, *A You have to figure it out.*@ Another said of Know Your Roots, *A Does it refer to hair?*@ On the other hand, they described Eat Right, Stay Active as positive, short, encouraging and direct.
- X Shorter for posters. They preferred the shorter messages for any posters and logos that might be used. They did mention that the longer messages were more informative. They added that longer messages were appropriate in venues where there was more time to read them (buses, magazines, brochures.)
- X They liked the integration of physical activity and healthy eating into one message. The women mentioned that they saw a link between healthy eating and physical activity especially in relation to weight control. Messages, then, should assist people in making the link between the two (though not necessarily focused on weight control issues).
- X The women also mentioned that they wanted to see a congruence between the graphics and the messages on posters. For example, if the message was a happy one, then the characters depicted on the poster should be smiling.
- X Precise. They want the message to be precise. They did not want terms such as *A often*@ (and in Spanish, *A menudo*@) that might lend themselves to ambiguous interpretation.
- X They want to be encouraged or invited to do something. They reacted negatively to commands or directive statements.

When asked whether there were any educational messages that should be stressed in a campaign to promote healthy eating and physical activity, Group 15 women suggested that the message stress caloric content of meals, that it focus on preparation and that it depict affordable meals; Group 17 women added that the messages should focus on cooking processes such as baking and steaming of foods. In all groups where the question was asked (Groups 15 through 17), the women agreed that the message should also acknowledge the link between diet and cancer. Finally, Groups 15 through 17 also mentioned that the messages should stress exercise as well. Among the items that they stated could be the focus of messages were as follows: substitutes to the gym; simple exercises that required no fancy equipment; show teamwork; and provide a rationale for engaging in physical activity.

That the women liked educational messages was apparent in the testing of the Better Value poster concept. Many of the women liked the >Good for you= vs. >Bad for you= comparison implicit in the concept and suggested that it could lead to a number of other comparisons the would be informative.

2. Logos

The women in Wave 3 (Groups 15 to 20) were shown a series of logos and asked to provide comments and select one that they preferred. Appendix E provides a summary of comments on the logos. Again, as with the messages, no one logo was preferred by all the women across all groups. The following provides summary statements on the favored logos in order of the number of groups expressing preference for it.

Good Things in Life: Preferred by Groups 16 and 19. They liked the colors on the logo and the appeal. Others sought to have it be more colorful with the use of primary colors.

Food Fit: Preferred by Group 20. Although preferred by only one group, this logo appealed to women in Groups 16 and 18 as well as to those in 15 if certain changes were made. They liked the appeal of the bike and the food basket.

A Healthy Balance Preferred by Group 15 as they liked its meaning and the words. They also suggested that brighter colors be used on the logo.

Group 17 had no preferred logo. Instead the women found both The Right Balance and The Good Life appealing. They liked the former because of the family image and the integration of the exercise component; they mentioned that they liked the latter because the graphic conveyed the story with no need for words.

3. Posters

Approximately 35 poster concepts were tested through the focus groups. Not all groups viewed all posters as some were discarded if these were found to be unappealing during the initial groups. Again, summary comment on the different posters by each of the groups who viewed them can be found in Appendix F; Appendix G includes copies of most of the materials tested in the Wave 3 groups while Appendix H provides selected quotes from the women. The discussion that follows is based on results of two poster concepts revised and tested during Wave 3 (Groups 15-20).

The Good Things in Life: This poster consisted of photographs of a child eating a slice of watermelon, three women running, and a father/son dyad. Four of the six groups preferred this poster. The women mentioned

that they liked the family and friends depicted; they liked its realism and use of ordinary people; and that it A...*has everything* (Fresno 16)@.

Full of Life: Group 20 preferred this poster. The women mentioned that they liked the depiction of a family and that the photographs looked natural. Women in other groups also liked this poster but found it lacking in that it did not seem to promote physical activity.

Poster Creation: Participants were also asked to share ideas for the creation of a poster. Among the different concepts which were brought up to include in a poster were a) the use of the family; b) use of ordinary people; c) the use of photographs; d) the depiction of movement and action and e) the use of bright colors.

4. Media Channels

Participants were asked to identify appropriate media channels for disseminating messages and materials developed through the campaign. Among the more commonly mentioned channels suggested by the women across the different groups were the following:

X	Schools	X	Cafeterias in schools and workplaces
X	Television, radio and newspaper advertisements	X	Brochures
X	Billboards	X	Food Stamp offices
X	Bus stops	X	T-shirts
X	Recipes	X	PTA
X	Preschools	X	Magazines
X	WIC	X	Supermarkets: boards
X	Doctor=s offices	X	Sides of trucks
X	Boys= and Girls= Clubs	X	Key chains
X	Fast food restaurants	X	Bumper stickers
X	Laundromats	X	Waiting rooms
X	Church functions	X	Beauty salons

They also suggested that special promotions be conducted such as couponing and free samples. Others wanted a more personalized approach such as through parent education classes. Several women in different groups also suggested that health parties be conducted akin to the Tupperware party concept; other ideas along the same lines were health fairs, health fiestas and health events that could be hosted by local community organizations like churches, the YMCA or the PTA.

Among the organizations that women mentioned as those that could be involved with the healthy eating and physical activity campaign effort were Mommy and Me, the YMCA, WIC, the Brownies, and sports clubs.

In-Store Audio: Participants mentioned that they were aware of the music played through closed circuit audio in some supermarkets, though some indicated that they do not pay attention to the audio. Many characterized the music as Aellevator@ music. Most who do listen to the in-store audio approved of placing advertisements in in-store audio systems. They mentioned that this strategy would serve as a reminder of what they needed to get while they shopped.

Sampling: All Wave 3 groups approved of sampling as a means of getting people to try new foods. Additionally, they mentioned that it was important to have a person on hand at the sample display. Among the functions they stated that this person could carry out were

- X Assure cleanliness
- X Maintain fresh samples
- X Direct them to the appropriate aisle for the product
- X Make the display more hospitable
- X Respond to any questions
- X Assure that no one tampered with the food.

III. Conclusions and Implications for the Campaign

Twenty focus groups were conducted to explore shopping behavior, meal preparation, knowledge of healthy meals, knowledge and perceptions of physical activity and to test concepts for a social marketing campaign on healthy eating and physical activity among low-income women in California. This section of the report presents conclusions based on the findings and draws implications for any future social marketing campaign to be carried out with the target segment.

At the level of concrete practice, women across all groups were very similar. Their location within similar institutional and social structures appears to produce recurring experiences regardless of economic status (food stamps users vs. non-user) or ethnicity. For example, in many ways, their daily routine seemed to be dictated by that of their children. Also, one consistent theme throughout the groups was the tenacity of economic pressures. This was reflected most clearly in their decisions related to where they would shop for groceries. The women appeared to shape their accounts of eating practices and physical activity in terms of the practical challenges that they must successfully overcome: tight financial circumstances and a perceived lack of time to engage in adequate planning and preparation. Other similarities noted across the groups were the following:

- X The women appeared to have some knowledge of what makes for healthy eating; some had even attempted to change their behavior and implement some of these practices. Similar practices were given for lessening fat content, e.g. remove the skin from chicken, do not fry foods;
- X Children are a major influence on food shopping and meal preparation;
- X The women displayed similar shopping habits: same stores, similar foods, and similar frequency of shopping.

However, even with these recurring themes, differences across groups did emerge. Eating practices differed by ethnicity as did the nature of experiences related to physical activity. Anglo women, for example, were explicit in their lack of concern for information about lean meats. It may be that they have a greater knowledge of lean meats or that they are already engaging in practices eliminating beef or favoring the use of lean meats. Differences related to physical activity appeared to be dictated more by age or economic position where younger females or those with slightly more disposable income were more likely to report engaging in recreational-type physical activity while older/poorer women reported more work-related and home maintenance-related physical activity. Also, working moms were less likely to have a typical breakfast or even to eat breakfast. Such differences may account for the lack of consensus on Aa message@.

Also, there may be some underlying differences that were not clearly elucidated through the focus group process. As mentioned previously, no one logo, no one message nor one poster was preferred across the groups by all women. In part, this may be due to the women=s differences as to their location within the stage of change, to their age, to the size of family or to

the life cycle of the family (presence of younger vs. older children). Thus, while there may be similarities across groups, the perceptions or conditions that lead to similar practices (cultural, economic status, age, etc.) may be such that prevent one message or poster from resonating with all target subsegments. In part, this is due to the nature of the continuous change in consumer perceptions, knowledge and awareness. This may also be due to the need to address more than just the promotions element of the marketing mix. There is no one magic bullet that will bring about the desired change in behavior. The challenge for the Network=s social marketers will be in fusing the direction provided by continuous research with the >art= inherent in a constantly evolving marketing approach. For example, short, direct appeals that signal low investment on the part of the women were preferred in messages. However, short, direct appeals limit the call to action that can be made in a message. An idea, then, may be to have an over-arching theme around which different variants of the message may be developed based on what the women know (cooking processes, meats) and do not know (fat content, exercise, lean meats). (See the Messages subsection below.) Also, it becomes critical that the social marketing campaign address all four components of the marketing mix (product, price, distribution systems, and promotions) to be effective. The remainder of this report addresses conclusions and implications specific to the issues discussed in the focus groups.

Meals: Meal planning occurs but not in an extensive manner. Planning of meals comes into play in shopping as the majority of women use a list and use this as a general scheme for the types of meals that will be prepared over the course of the week. However, the actual ritual of the daily preparation of meals, especially dinner, is more serendipitous where the >plan= will be determined by the constraints of a) children=s tastes; b) time; and c) what is available in the cupboard or freezer. In response to these constraints, the women look to prepare meals that are cheap, quick and easy to prepare and that will be appetizing to the children.

Healthy Meals: There is awareness of some strategies for making meals healthier. Two major ones are altering the cooking process and using meats other than beef. The women were aware that the cooking process contributes to the making of a healthy meal. In fact, they isolated four processes that make for healthier meals: Baking, Broiling, Boiling and Steaming. There is less awareness among Latinas and African American women of lean red meat in contributing to healthier meals. Also, use of vegetables appears to be a significant component of any perceived healthy meal. Thus, while there is knowledge of what is healthy and how to prepare healthier meals, they perceive the barriers to doing so linked to time, affordability and tastes. The type of support needed appears to be more of a concrete nature, i.e., >get me price reductions=. Hence, campaign designers need to focus on these issues as well as the promotion component of the marketing mix.

There also appeared to be a sense that one did not need to teach children healthy eating behaviors. The women perceived that the children were aware of these through school. More importantly, they appeared to favor modeling behavior over actual teaching behavior for encouraging healthy eating habits.

Shopping Behavior: Women shop for groceries in large grocery stores that are usually part of a chain. They prefer these stores mainly because they offer lower prices and because the store is more likely to be close to their home. However, the quality of meat and produce also appears to be another important determinant of where they shop. Though they also buy in small, neighborhood stores, they reserve such shopping for when they run out of items such as milk or bread.

The women, regardless of ethnicity or food stamp status, appeared to be very cost conscious. Price promotions appeared to motivate store preference or trials of new products or brands.

Consumption: Children play an important part in what is purchased and consumed in the household. Their needs and tastes are catered to as is evident in the purchase of whole milk and white bread. The women noted that they try to prepare healthy meals because of the children, though the actual meal may be a result of the compromise between what is good for them and what they will eat. Also, attempts to change milk consumption patterns will need to address its perceived benefits for children. Whole milk is perceived as having more vitamins and a better taste. Also, as noted, the strategies for getting children to drink lower fat milk involved adding fat to the product.

Physical Activity: Women perceive that they do engage in physical activity though not as much as they would like. Time and motivation appear to be the salient barriers to doing more physical activity. The perception of what has to be done to be physically fit is viewed in traditional, prescriptive terms. They see being fit as having to work out, intensively, for a prescribed amount of time and for a specific number of days per week. Designers may want to try to shift the focus from that of an unpleasant necessity for health to one of play and making physical activity fun. The women noted that children are naturally active because of play. The campaign may want to recast the image of physical activity to that of >play= with the focus on everyday tasks such as:

- X Making physical activity a form of play: walking, dancing, biking, skating, playing in the water:

- X Making a walk interesting by adding different steps (e.g., skipping, bouncing, spinning);
- X Providing hints on how to get others to exercise with them; or
- X Providing hints on exploring new routes to vary the walking/biking routines

The women appear to be similar to other social segments in that they are not Ajoiners@. Thus, campaign designers need to develop outreach strategies that tap the different media in places that the target group(s) are likely to be: hospitals, doctors offices, church functions and schools.

The women view their friends and family as important members of their support network and mention them as potentially important agents in motivating them to be more physically active. Also, the type of support for engaging in physical activity appears to be more of an emotional and informative nature. Campaign designers may wish to consider materials that address these. For example:

Emotional: Skills in making friends or recognizing the support network. A pamphlet could have space where the person could list out friends to call when they want to engage in some physical activity.

Informational: Informs what can be done. A brochure on how to make walking more play-like, e.g., add bouncing, skipping or jumping step to your walk.

Merchandising Concept: Both the Total Meal and the Compucook Center were well received in almost all groups and it is highly probable that the women will employ either concept. Design considerations should include recipes for simple, affordable meals as part of either concept. Finally, signage should be added to the display to attract attention. Use of the word AFree@ in such signs is highly recommended. Given the important role that children play in food purchasing and meal preparation decision-making, designers may want to include a CompuCook screen on AMaking Healthy > Kid-Friendly= Meals@ as an option for consumers.

Messages: No one message resonated in all groups. However, the women appeared to be looking for a short message that was easily decoded and that integrated both healthy eating and physical activity. The knowledge women have regarding both concepts is that there is an incipient link between both especially as it

relates to weight control. Also, there is a link, albeit weak, made between diet and cancer. However, the mention of the word >cancer= seemed to magnify interest when listening to radio advertisements. Finally, women knew about the ways to make healthy meals: change the cooking process, eat less beef, and eat more chicken and fish. Less knowledge was apparent with regard to the role of caloric content, lean meats and the rationales for engaging in physical activity. It may be that social marketers may need to focus on a variety of issues rather than focus on one appeal. These could be phased in to correspond to stages of change. Another strategy may be to push for an easily-recalled concept that blends both physical activity and healthy eating. For example, the social marketing campaign might push a ATake Five and Be Healthy (or Take a Healthy 5)@:

- X Initiate/Increase exercise
- X Increase fruit & vegetable intake
- X Decrease fat intake
- X Eat less meat/Eat lean meats
- X Cook healthier: Broil, Boil, Steam or Bake

Such a concept would allow for building on a number of trailer issues that would serve to educate/inform the target audience as was suggested with the >Better Value= poster concept. Each of the above mentioned bullets would lend itself to expanding on the initial concept based on what they know and still need to know about each of the issues.

Logo: No one logo appealed to all. Food Fit seemed to have an appeal across more of the Wave 3 groups, as it seemed to have what the women sought: short message that did not require interpretation and where the graphic itself embodied the message. In general, though, it appears that the women look for the following in a logo:

- X That the message is transmitted solely through the graphics
- X That the message be conveyed simply and quickly
- X That it be a current image
- X That the logo use bright colors
- X That the logo integrate healthy eating and physical activity
- X That the graphic depicts Afun@
- X That there is congruence between the graphic and any words used

Poster: The Good Things in Life was clearly the poster preferred in most groups due to the family, friends, health trio. Though one poster was preferred in 4 of the six groups, it appears that either poster would be appealing to the target segment. Both incorporate many of the same features favored by the women. Among those favored features are the following:

- X Use of realism: photographs; relevant situations
- X Use of family theme
- X Use of bright colors
- X Congruence between the images and the message
- X Depict happy, fun events
- X Depict healthy food in graphics and pictures
- X Include a contemporary message
- X Integrate healthy eating and physical activity
- X Convey a sense of energy (power; active)
- X Graphics and photographs are easy to decipher
- X Depict their support network (family; friends)
- X Focus on limited situations or themes
- X Depict fruits and vegetables which are perceived as healthy

New Product Trials: Coupons or some other price promotion appear to spur interest in new items, changing brands or trials of products. Product sampling would seem to enhance trials.

It seemed that many of the women have the knowledge and awareness of healthy eating and tried to implement the changes (e.g., eating more chicken, serving vegetables with meals) that lead to healthier meals. However, they seem to go back to previous unhealthy eating practices and are unable to sustain the changed behavior. Future research, then, may need to explore what factors are contributing to their inability to maintain healthy eating practices. Are these factors more closely aligned with economic pressures or traditional eating practices? Are these pressures more closely related to the identified barriers of lack of time and preparation skills?

Appendix A: Screener

Appendix B: Moderators Guides

Appendix C: Sample Table

Appendix D: Message Comments

Appendix E: Logo Comments

Appendix F: Poster Comments

Appendix G: Samples of Materials Tested

Appendix H: Selected Quotes